

those fire, those four captains and they are all captains, fifty years old or older, mature individuals, to have the same authority as their team members, the police officers who work together in this whole area of arson in our major metropolitan city. Basically this bill has been supported by professional insurance agents, the City of Omaha, the Omaha Task Force, the Fire Unions, a whole lot of folks. That is it.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Chambers, then Senator Beutler.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman and members of the Legislature, I hope you will pay attention to this bill. It is one of the most pernicious pieces of legislation to come before us and I am not saying that in jest. What you are doing here is taking what, in effect, is a fireman, the old traditional concept of a fireman, they must say firefighter because females also get on the fire division, but, Lincoln who testified for this bill said they didn't want any parts of it. They don't want their investigators carrying pistols. Now I said, pistols, but based on the wording of the law these people can carry any weapon of any kind, any variety. They can carry short barreled shotguns. They can carry rifles. They can carry pistols, brass knuckles, any kind of thing that can qualify as a weapon. This is a very poorly drafted piece of-- Senator Newell, this has no reflection on you because you didn't draft it--this is trash legislation. Now, in addition to what I have just said, the firefighter, the arson investigator is a peace officer but in addition to being classed as a peace officer a few lines further, he or she has all the power of a police officer. So, is there a difference between a peace officer and a police officer? Who knows? But in any case, these individuals, while not being law enforcement people, can do anything a peace officer can do, anything a police officer can do with reference to warrants, to subpoenas. They can place people under oath. They can make you produce documents and if you say something which they say is false, they can have you charged with perjury. We are talking about the fire division, not the police division, not the county attorney's office, but fire investigators and let us look in the bill to see what the true duty of a fire investigator is. It is to determine the cause, origin, and circumstances of a fire. Now how is being loaded down with weapons going to help this individual determine the cause, origin and circumstances of a fire? Some of the individuals who want to be carting around these pistols, rifles, shotguns and whatnots have been on the fire division for nineteen years and some longer and have never encountered a situation where they needed to draw a pistol on anybody or threaten or intimidate